

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

CONCERNING THE WRITING
OF HISTORY.

BY

JAMES FORD RHODES, LL. D.

(From the Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1900,
Vol. I, pages 49-65.)

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III.—CONCERNING THE WRITING OF HISTORY.

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Called on at the last moment, owing to the illness of Mr. Eggleston, to supply in a measure a place which can not be filled, I present to you a paper on the writing of history. It is in a way a continuance of my inaugural address before this association one year ago, and despite the continuity of the thought I have endeavored to treat the same subject from a different point of view. While going over the same ground and drawing my lessons from the same historians, it is new matter so far as I have had the honor to present it to the American Historical Association.

An historian, to make a mark, must show some originality somewhere in his work. The originality may be in a method of investigation; it may be in the use of some hitherto inaccessible or unprinted material; it may be in the employment of some sources of information open to everybody, but not before used, or it may be in a fresh combination of well-known and well-elaborated facts. It is this last-named feature that leads Mr. Winsor to say, in speaking of the different views that may be honestly maintained from working over the same material, "The study of history is perennial." I think I can make my meaning clearer as to the originality one should try to infuse into historical work by drawing an illustration from the advice of a literary man as to the art of writing. Charles Dudley Warner once said to me, "Everyone who writes should have something to add to the world's stock of knowledge or literary expression. If he falls unconsciously into imitation or quotation, he takes away from his originality. No matter if some great writer has expressed the thought in better language than you can use, if you take his words you detract from your own originality. Express your thought

feebly in your own way rather than with strength by borrowing the words of another."

This same principle in the art of authorship may be applied to the art of writing history. "Follow your own star," said Emerson, "and it will lead you to that which none other can attain. Imitation is suicide. You must take yourself for better or worse as your own portion." If one is led to the writing of history, he may be sure that there is in him some originality, that he can add something to the knowledge of some period. Let him give himself to meditation, to searching out what epoch and what kind of treatment of that epoch is best adapted to his powers and to his training. I mean not only the collegiate training, but the sort of training one gets consciously or unconsciously from the very circumstances of one's life. In the persistence of thinking, his subject will flash upon him. Parkman, said Lowell, showed genius in the choice of his subject. The recent biography of Parkman emphasizes the idea which we get from his works—that only a man who lived in the virgin forests of this country and loved them, who had traveled in the far West as a pioneer, with Indians for companions, could have done that work. Parkman's experience can not be had by anyone again, and he brought to bear the wealth of it in that fifty years' occupation of his. Critics of exact knowledge—such as Justin Winsor, for instance—find limitations in Parkman's books that may impair the permanence of his fame, but I suspect that his is the only work in American history that can not and will not be written over again. The reason of it is that he had a unique life which has permeated his narrative, giving it the stamp of originality. No man whose training was that had alone in the best schools of Germany, France, or England could have written those books. A training racy of the soil was needed. "A practical knowledge," wrote Niebuhr, "must support historical jurisprudence, and if anyone has got that he can easily master all scholastic speculations." A man's knowledge of everyday life in some way fits him for a certain field of historical study—in that field lies success. In seeking a period, no American need confine himself to his own country. "European history for Americans," said Motley, "has to be almost entirely rewritten."

I shall touch upon only two of the headings of historical

originality which I have mentioned. The first that I shall speak of is the employment of some sources of information open to everybody, but not before used. A significant case of this in American history is the use which Doctor Von Holst made of newspaper material. Niles's Register, a lot of newspaper cuttings, as well as speeches and state papers in a compact form, had, of course, been referred to by many writers who dealt with the period they covered, but in the part of his history covering from 1850 to 1860 Von Holst made an extensive and varied employment of newspapers by studying the newspaper files themselves. As the aim of history is truth, and as newspapers fail sadly in accuracy, it is not surprising that many historical students believe that the examination of newspapers for any given period will not pay for the labor and drudgery involved; but the fact that a trained German historical scholar and teacher at a German university should have found, when he came to write the history of our own country, some truth in our newspaper files gives to their use for that period the seal of scientific approval. Doctor Von Holst used this material with pertinence and effect; his touch was nice. I used to wonder at his knowledge of the newspaper world, of the men who made and wrote our journals, until he told me that when he first came to this country one of his methods in gaining a knowledge of English was to read the advertisements in the newspapers. Reflection will show one what a picture of the life of a people this, in addition to the news columns, must be.

No one, of course, will go to newspapers for facts if he can find those facts in better attested documents. The haste with which the daily records of the world's doings are made up precludes sifting and revision. Yet in the decade between 1850 and 1860 you will find facts in the newspapers nowhere else set down. Public men of commanding position were fond of writing letters to the journals with a view of influencing public sentiment. These letters in the newspapers are as valuable historical material as if they were carefully collected, edited, and published in the form of books. Men made speeches that one must read which he will nowhere find except in the journals. The immortal debates of Lincoln and Douglas in 1858 were never put into a book until 1860, existing previously only in newspaper print. Newspapers are

sometimes important in fixing a date and in establishing the whereabouts of a man. If, for example, a writer draws a fruitful inference from the alleged fact that President Lincoln went to see Edwin Booth play Hamlet in Washington in February, 1863, and if one finds by a consultation of the newspaper theatrical advertisements that Edwin Booth did not visit Washington during that month, the significance of the inference is destroyed. Lincoln paid General Scott a memorable visit at West Point in June, 1862. You may, if I remember correctly, search the books in vain to get at the exact date of this visit; but turn to the newspaper files and you find that the President left Washington at such an hour on such a day, arrived at Jersey City at a stated time, and made the transfer to the other railroad which took him to the station opposite West Point. The time of his leaving West Point and the hour of his return to Washington are also given.

The value of newspapers as an indication of public sentiment is sometimes questioned, but it can hardly be doubted that the average man will read the newspaper with the sentiments of which he agrees. "I inquired about newspaper opinion," said Joseph Chamberlain in the House of Commons last May. "I knew no other way of getting at popular opinion." During the years between 1854 and 1860 the daily journals were a pretty good reflection of public sentiment in the United States. Wherever, for instance, you found the New York Weekly Tribune largely read, Republican majorities were sure to be had when election day came. For fact and for opinion, if you knew the contributors, statements and editorials by them were entitled to as much weight as similar public expressions in any other form. You get to know Greeley and you learn to recognize his style. Now, an editorial from him is proper historical material, taking into account always the circumstances under which he wrote. The same may be said of Dana and of Hildreth, both editorial writers for the Tribune, and of the Washington dispatches of J. S. Pike. It is interesting to compare the public letters of Greeley to the Tribune from Washington in 1856 with his private letters at the same time to Dana. There are no misstatements in the public letters, but there is a suppression of the truth. The explanations in the private correspondence are clearer, and you need them to know fully how affairs

looked in Washington to Greeley at the time; but that fact by no means detracts from the value of the public letters as historical material. I have found newspapers of greater value both for fact and opinion during the decade of 1850 to 1860 than for the period of the civil war. A comparison of the newspaper accounts of battles with the history of them which may be drawn from the correspondence and reports in the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion will show how inaccurate and misleading was the war correspondence of the daily journals. It could not well be otherwise. The correspondent was obliged in haste to write the story of a battle of which he saw but a small section, and instead of telling the little part which he knew actually, he had to give to a public greedy for news a complete survey of the whole battlefield. This story was too often colored by his liking or aversion for the generals in command. A study of the confidential historical material of the civil war, apart from the military operations, in comparison with the journalistic accounts, gives one a higher idea of the accuracy and shrewdness of the newspaper correspondents. Few important things were brewing at Washington of which they did not get an inkling. But I always like to think of two signal exceptions. Nothing ever leaked out in regard to the famous "Thoughts for the President's consideration," which Seward submitted to Lincoln in March, 1861, and only very incorrect guesses of the President's first emancipation proclamation, brought before his Cabinet in July, 1862, got into newspaper print.

Beware of hasty, strained, and imperfect generalizations. An historian should always remember that he is a sort of trustee for his readers. No matter how copious may be his notes, he can not fully explain his processes or the reason of his confidence in one witness and not in another, his belief in one honest man against a half dozen untrustworthy men, without such prolixity as to make a general history unreadable. Now, in this position as trustee he is bound to assert nothing for which he has not evidence, as much as an executor of a will or the trustee for widows and orphans is obligated to render a correct account of the moneys in his possession. For this reason Grote has said, "An historian is bound to produce the materials upon which he builds, be they never so fantastic,

absurd, or incredible." Hence the necessity for footnotes. While mere illustrative and interesting footnotes are perhaps to be avoided, on account of their redundancy, those which give authority for the statements in the text can never be in excess. Many good histories have undoubtedly been published where the authors have not printed their footnotes; but they must have had, nevertheless, precise records for their authorities. The advantage and necessity of printing the notes is that you furnish your critic an opportunity of finding you out if you have mistaken or strained your authorities. Bancroft's example is peculiar. In his earlier volumes he used footnotes, but in volume 7 he changed his plan and omitted notes, whether of reference or explanation. Nor do you find them in either of his carefully revised editions. Bancroft himself did not, I believe, make in writing any explanation of this change, but I have been informed that he stated in conversation that as very much of his material was manuscript to which he alone had had access, and writers on the same subject used his notes without giving him due credit, he had come to the conclusion that he would not publish his sources to the world. Again, Blaine's *Twenty Years of Congress*, a work which, properly weighed, is not without historical value, is only to be read with great care on account of his hasty and inaccurate generalizations. There are evidences of good, honest labor in those two volumes, much of which must have been done by himself. There is an aim at truth and impartiality, but many of his general statements will seem, to anyone who has gone over the original material, to rest on a slight basis. If Blaine had felt the necessity of giving authorities in a footnote for every statement about which there might have been a question, he certainly would have written an entirely different sort of a book.

My other head is the originality which comes from a fresh combination of known historical facts.

I do not now call to mind any more notable chapter which illustrates this than the chapter of Curtius, "The years of peace." One is perhaps better adapted for the keen enjoyment of it if he does not know the original material, for his suspicion that some of the inferences are strained and unwarranted might become a certainty. But accepting it as the mature and honest elaboration of one of the greatest historians

of Greece of our day, it is a sample of the vivifying of dry bones and of a dovetailing of facts and ideas that makes a narrative to charm and instruct. One feels that the spirit of that age we all like to think and dream about is there, and if one has been so fortunate as to visit the Athens of to-day, that chapter, so great is the author's constructive imagination, carries you back and makes you for the moment live in the Athens of Pericles, of Sophocles, of Phidias and Herodotus.

With the abundance of materials for modern history, and, for that reason, our tendency to diffuseness, nothing is so important as a thorough acquaintance with the best classic models, such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Tacitus. In Herodotus you have an example of an interesting story with the unity of the narrative well sustained in spite of certain unnecessary digressions. His book is obviously a life work and the work of a man who had an extensive knowledge gained by reading, society, and travel, and who brought his knowledge to bear upon his chosen task. That the history is interesting all admit, but in different periods of criticism stress is sometimes laid on the untrustworthy character of the narrative, with the result that there has been danger of striking Herodotus from the list of historical models; but such is the merit of his work that the Herodotus cult again revives, and, I take it, is now at its acme. I received, three years ago, while in Egypt, a vivid impression of him whom we used to style the Father of History. Spending the day at the great Pyramids, when, after one has satisfied his first curiosity, after one has filled his eyes and mind with the novelty of the spectacle, nothing is so gratifying to the historic sense as to gaze on those most wonderful monuments of human industry, constructed certainly 5,000 years ago, and to read at the same time the account that Herodotus gave of his visit there 2,360 years before the present year of our Lord. That night I read in a modern and garish Cairo hotel the current number of the London Times. In it was an account of an annual meeting of the Royal Historical Society and a report of a formal and carefully prepared address of its president, whose subject was "Herodotus," whose aim was to point out the value of the Greek writer as a model to modern historians. The Times, for the moment laying aside its habitual attack on the then Liberal government, devoted its main leader to

Herodotus—to his merits and the lessons he conveyed to the European writers. The article was a remarkable blending of scholarship and good sense, and I ended the day with the reflection of what a space in the world's history Herodotus filled, himself describing the work of twenty-five hundred years before his own time and being dilated on in 1894 by one of the most modern of nineteenth-century newspapers.

It is generally agreed, I think, that Thucydides is first in order of time of philosophic historians, but it does not seem to me that we have most to learn from him in the philosophic quality. The tracing of cause and effect, the orderly sequence of events, will certainly be better developed by moderns than it has been by ancients. The influence of Darwin and the support and proof which he gives to the doctrine of evolution furnish a training of thought which was impossible to the ancients; but Thucydides has digested his material and compressed his narrative without taking the life out of his story in a manner to make us despair, and this does not, I take it, come from paucity of materials. A test which I began to make as a study in style has helped me in estimating the solidity of a writer. Washington Irving formed his style by reading attentively from time to time a page of Addison and then, closing the book, endeavored to write out the same ideas in his own words. In this way his style became assimilated to that of the great English essayist. I have tried the same mode with several writers. I found that the plan succeeded with Macaulay and with Lecky. I tried it again and again with Shakespeare and Hawthorne, but if I succeeded in writing out the paragraph I found that it was because I memorized their very words. To write out their ideas in my own language I found impossible. I have had the same result with Thucydides in trying to do this with his description of the plague in Athens. Now, I reason from this in the case of Shakespeare and Thucydides that their thought is so concise they themselves got rid of all redundancies; hence to effect the reproduction of their ideas in any but their own language is practically impossible.

It is related of Macaulay, somewhere in his *Life and Letters*, that in a moment of despair, when he instituted a comparison between his manuscript and the work of Thucydides, he thought of throwing his manuscript into the fire. I suspect

that Macaulay had not the knack of discarding material on which he had spent time and effort, seeing how easily such events glowed under his picturesque pen. This is one reason why he is prolix in the last three volumes. The first two, which begin with the famous introductory chapter and continue the story through the revolution of 1688 to the accession of William and Mary, seem to me models of historical composition so far as arrangement, orderly method, and liveliness of narration go. Another defect of Macaulay is that, while he was an omnivorous reader and had a prodigious memory, he was not given to long-continued and profound reflection. He read and rehearsed his reading in memory, but he did not give himself to "deep, abstract meditation" and did not surrender himself to "the fruitful leisures of the spirit." Take this instance of Macaulay's account of a journey: "The express train reached Hollyhead about 7 in the evening," he writes. "I read between London and Bangor the lives of the emperors from Maximin to Carinus, inclusive, in the Augustine history, and was greatly amused and interested." On board the ship: "I put on my greatcoat and sat on deck during the whole voyage. As I could not read, I used an excellent substitute for reading. I went through *Paradise Lost* in my head. I could still repeat half of it, and that the best half. I really never enjoyed it so much." In Dublin: "The rain was so heavy that I was forced to come back in a covered car. While in this detestable vehicle I looked rapidly through the correspondence between Pliny and Trajan and thought that Trajan made a most creditable figure." Macaulay did not digest his knowledge well. Yet in reading his *Life and Letters* you know that you are in company with a man who read many books and you give faith to Thackeray's remark, "Macaulay reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description." It is a matter of regret that the progress of historical criticism and the scientific teaching of history have had the tendency to drive Macaulay out of the fashion with students, and I know not whether the good we used to get out of him thirty-five years ago can now be had. For I seem to miss something that we historical students had a generation ago—and that is enthusiasm for the subject. The enthusiasm that we then had—the desire to compass all knowledge, the wish to gather the

fruits of learning and lay them devoutly at the feet of our chosen muse—this enthusiasm we owed to Macaulay and to Buckle. Quite properly, no one reads Buckle now, and I can not gainsay what John Morley said of Macaulay. “Macaulay seeks truth,” wrote Morley, “not as she should be sought, devoutly, tentatively, with the air of one touching the hem of a sacred garment, but clutching her by the hair of the head and dragging her after him in a kind of boisterous triumph, a prisoner of war and not a goddess.” It is, nevertheless, true that Macaulay and Buckle imparted a new interest to history.

I have spoken of the impression we get of Macaulay through reading his *Life and Letters*. Of Carlyle, in reading the remarkable biography of him, we get the notion of a great thinker as well as a great reader. He was not as keen and diligent in the pursuit of material as Macaulay. He did not like to work in libraries; he wanted every book he used in his own study—padded as it was against the noises which drove him wild. H. Morse Stephens relates that Carlyle did not use a collection of documents relating to the French Revolution in the British Museum for the reason that the museum authorities would not have a special room reserved for him where he might study.¹ Rather than work in a room with other people, he neglected this valuable material. But Carlyle has certainly digested and used his material well. His French Revolution seems to approach the historical works of the classics in there being so much in a little space. “With the gift of song,” Lowell said, “Carlyle would have been the greatest of epic poets since Homer;” and he also writes, Carlyle’s historical compositions are no more history than the historical plays Shakespeare.

The contention between the scientific historians and those who hold to the old models is interesting and profitable. One may enjoy the controversy and derive benefit from it without taking sides. I suspect that there is truth in the view of both. We may be sure that the long-continued study and approval by scholars of many ages of the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Tacitus implies historical merit on their part in addition to literary art. It is, however, interesting to note

¹ But see Froude’s account. *Life of Carlyle*, vol. 2, p. 363.

the profound difference between President Woolsey's opinion of Thucydides and that of some of his late German critics. Woolsey said, "I have such confidence in the absolute truthfulness of Thucydides that were he really chargeable with folly, as Grote alleges [in the affair of Amphipolis], I believe he would have avowed it." On the other hand, one German critic, cited by Holm, says that Thucydides is a poet who invents facts partly in order to teach people how things ought to be done and partly because he liked to depict certain scenes of horror. He says further, a narrative of certain occurrences is so full of impossibilities that it must be pure invention on the part of the historian. Another German maintains that Thucydides has indulged in "a fanciful and half-romantic picture of events." But Holm, whom the scientific historians claim as one of their own, says, "Thucydides still remains a trustworthy historical authority;" and, "On the whole, therefore, the old view that he is a truthful writer is not in the least shaken." Again Holm writes: "Attempts have been made to convict Thucydides of serious inaccuracies, but without success. On the other hand, the writer of this work [that is, the scientific historian, Holm], is able to state that he has followed him topographically for the greater part of the sixth and seventh books—and consequently for nearly one-fourth of the whole history—and has found that the more carefully his words are weighed and the more accurately the ground is studied the clearer both the text and events become, and this is certainly high praise." Holm and Percy Gardner, both of whom have the modern method and have studied diligently the historical evidence from coins and inscriptions, placed great reliance on Herodotus. Compare the attitude of scholars to Plutarch and Polybius, whose merits are contrary, with their attitude towards Herodotus, Thucydides, and Tacitus. The last three are taken as models of historical composition, but for such a standing Plutarch and Polybius have no advocates.

The sifting of time settles the reputations of historians. Of the English of the eighteenth century only one historian has come down to us as worthy of serious study. Time is wasted in reading Hume and Robertson as models, and no one goes to them for facts. But thirty years ago no course of historical reading was complete without Hume. In this century

the sifting process goes on. One has not lost much if he has not read Alison's History of Europe. But he was much in vogue in the '50s. Harper's Magazine published a part of his history as a serial. His rounded periods and bombastic utterances were quoted with delight by those who thought that history was not history unless it was bombastic. Emerson says somewhere, "Avoid adjectives; let your nouns do the work." There was hardly a sentence in Alison which did not traverse this rule. One of his admirers told me that the great merit of his style was his choiceness and aptness in his use of adjectives. It is a style which now provokes merriment, and had Alison been learned and impartial, and had he possessed a good method, his style for the present taste would have killed his book. Gibbon is sometimes called pompous, but place him by the side of Alison and what one may have previously called pompousness one now calls dignity.

Two of the literary historians of our century survive—Carlyle and Macaulay. They may be read with care. We may do as Cassius said Brutus did to him, observe all their faults, set them in a notebook, learn and con them by rote; nevertheless we shall get good from them. Oscar Browning said—I am quoting H. Morse Stephens again—of Carlyle's description of the flight of the king to Varennes, that in every one of his details where a writer could go wrong, Carlyle had gone wrong; but added that, although all the details were wrong, Carlyle's account is essentially accurate. No defense, I think, can be made of Carlyle's statement that Marat was a "blear-eyed dog leech," and those statements from which you get the distinct impression that the complexion of Robespierre was green; nevertheless, everyone who studies the French Revolution reads Carlyle, and he is read because the reading is profitable. The battle descriptions in Carlyle's Frederick the Great are well worth reading. How refreshing they are after technical descriptions! Carlyle said once, "Battles since Homer's time, when they were nothing but fighting mobs, have ceased to be worth reading about," but he made the modern battle interesting.

Macaulay is an honest partisan. You learn very soon how to take him, and when distrust begins one has correctives in Gardiner and Ranke. Froude is much more dangerous. His splendid narrative style does not compensate for his inaccuracies. Langlois makes an apt quotation from Froude. "We

saw," says Froude, of the city of Adelaide, in Australia, "below us in a basin, with the river winding through it, a city of 150,000 inhabitants, none of whom has ever known or ever will know one moment's anxiety as to the recurring regularity of three meals a day." Now for the facts. Langlois says: "Adelaide is built on an eminence; no river runs through it. When Froude visited it the population did not exceed 75,000, and it was suffering from a famine at the time." Froude was curious in his inaccuracies. He furnished the data which convict him of error. He quoted inaccurately the Simancas manuscripts and deposited correct copies in the British Museum. Carlyle and Macaulay are honest partisans and you know how to take them, but for constitutional inaccuracy such as Froude's no allowance can be made.

Perhaps it may be said of Green that he combines the merits of the scientific and literary historian. He has written an honest and artistic piece of work. But he is not infallible. I have been told on good authority that in his reference to the Thirty Years' War he has hardly stated a single fact correctly, yet the general impression you get from his account is correct. Stubbs and Gardiner are preeminently the scientific historians of England. Of Stubbs, from actual knowledge, I regret that I can not speak, but the reputation he has among historical experts is positive proof of his great value. Of Gardiner I can speak with knowledge. Anyone who desires to write history will do well to read every line Gardiner has written—not the text alone, but also the notes. It is an admirable study in method which will bear important fruit. But because Gibbon, Gardiner, and Stubbs should be one's chief reliance, it does not follow that one may neglect Macaulay, Carlyle, Tacitus, Thucydides, and Herodotus. Gardiner himself has learned much from Macaulay and Carlyle. All of them may be criticised on one point or another, but they all have lessons for us.

We shall all agree that the aim of history writing is to get at the truth and express it as clearly as possible. The differences crop out when we begin to elaborate our meaning. "This I regard as the historian's highest function," writes Tacitus, "to let no worthy action be uncommemorated, and to hold out the reprobation of posterity as a terror to evil words and deeds;" while Langlois and the majority of the scholars of Oxford are of the opinion that the formation and expression

of ethical judgments, the approval or condemnation of Julius Cæsar or of Cæsar Borgia, is not a thing within the historian's province. Let the controversy go on! It is well worth one's while to read the presentations of the subject from the different points of view. But infallibility will nowhere be found. Mommsen and Curtius in their detailed investigations received applause from those who adhered rigidly to the scientific view of history, but when they addressed the public in their endeavor, it is said, to produce an effect upon it, they relaxed their scientific rigor; hence such a chapter as Curtius's "Years of peace," and in another place his transmuting a conjecture of Grote into an assertion; hence Mommsen's effusive panegyric of Cæsar. If Mommsen did depart from the scientific rules, I suspect that it came from no desire of a popular success, but rather from the enthusiasm of much learning. The examples of Curtius and Mommsen show probably that such a departure from strict impartiality is inherent in the writing of general history, and it comes, I take it, naturally and unconsciously. Holm is a scientific historian, but on the Persian Invasion he writes: "I have followed Herodotus in many passages which are unauthenticated and probably even untrue, because he reproduces the popular traditions of the Greeks." And again: "History in the main ought only to be a record of facts, but now and then the historian may be allowed to display a certain interest in his subject." These expressions traverse the canons of scientific history as much as the sayings of the ancient historiographers themselves. But because men have warm sympathies that cause them to color their narratives shall no more general histories be written? Shall history be confined to the printing of original documents and to the publication of learned monographs in which the discussion of authorities is mixed up with the relation of events? The proper mental attitude of the general historian is to take no thought of popularity. The remark of Macaulay that he would make his history take the place of the last novel on my lady's table is not scientific. The audience which the general historian should have in mind is that of historical experts—men who are devoting their lives to the study of history. Words of approval from them are worth more than any popular recognition, for theirs is the enduring praise. Their criticism should be respected; there should be

never-ceasing work to avoid giving them cause for fault-finding. No labor should be despised which shall enable one to present things just as they are. Our endeavor should be to think straight and see clear. A circumstance should not be related on insufficient evidence because it is interesting, but an affair well attested should not be discarded because it happens to have a human interest. I feel quite sure that the cardinal aim of Gardiner was to be accurate and to proportion his story well. In this he has succeeded; but it is no drawback that he has made his volumes interesting. Jacob D. Cox, who added to other accomplishments that of being learned in the law, and who looked upon Gardiner with such reverence that he called him the Chief Justice, said there was no reason why he should read novels, as he found Gardiner's history more interesting than any romance. The scientific historians have not revolutionized historical methods, but they have added much. The process of accretion has been going on since, at any rate, the time of Herodotus, and the canons for weighing evidence and the synthesis of materials are better understood now than ever before, for they have been reduced from many models. I feel sure that there has been a growth in candor. Compare the critical note to a later edition which Macaulay wrote in 1857, maintaining the truth of his charge against William Penn, with the manly way in which Gardiner owns up when an error or insufficient evidence for a statement is pointed out. It is the ethics of the profession to be forward in correcting errors. The difference between the old and the new lies in the desire to have men think you are infallible and the desire to be accurate.

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